

# Week 2 Assignment – Family Systems & Generational Patterns

*Inspired by the family systems insights of Murray Bowen, MD*

## **Purpose**

This assignment is where understanding becomes recognition. Give yourself time. This is meant to be written on, not rushed.

## **PART 1 – Draw the Structure**

On a blank sheet of paper, draw three generations: you and your partner at the bottom, parents above you, grandparents above them. Draw simple lines for marriages, divorces, separations, and deaths.

Use this space to note anything that stands out as you draw.

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**PART 2 – Emotional Roles**

Next to each person, write one or two words describing how they handled tension (for example: peacemaker, withdrawer, responsibility-carrier, anxious, distant, reactive).

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**PART 3 – Repeating Positions**

Answer in writing: Who handled conflict? Who avoided it? Who carried emotional weight? Who was protected? Who was pulled in when things got tense?

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**Complete:** In my marriage, I tend to take the position of:

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**PART 4 – Meaning That Traveled**

Finish these sentences honestly. Leave space. Let yourself think.

In my family, love often meant:

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In my family, anger usually meant:

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In my family, closeness meant:

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In my family, independence meant:

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**PART 5 – The Lightbulb**

Finish slowly: When anxiety shows up in my marriage, it feels familiar because:

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What I am reacting to now is similar to:

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**PART 6 – Practice This Week**

When anxiety shows up, pause and say: *“This may be old. I don’t need to fix it right now.”*

Notice what happens when you do not rush to act.

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